

How to work with a Citizen Advisory Group

**2003 MS4 Conference
Corpus Christi, Texas**

Presented by City of Sherman Environmental Education



A Partnership Approach

- Identify specific needs for Sherman's storm water management program
- Identify issues that require implementation over the longer term
 - Example: Education programs in local schools
- Research existing programs for partnership that can be used in the local community



Evolution of the Citizen Advisory Group

- Public meetings during planning stages of storm water program
- Contact with community groups, schools and other potential partners to inform and educate about storm water program
- Identification of interested individuals



Baker Park, Sherman

Evolution of the Citizen Advisory Group

- Original proposal:
 - Task Force with limited term
 - Broad-based representation
 - Pre-determined agenda and goals
 - Address all storm water issues of community concern
- Concerns from management: scope of work too broad; potential for too much autonomy & “policy-making” for the City

Evolution of the Citizen Advisory Group

■ Proposed compromise:

- “Ad hoc committee”
- Limited agenda and short life

■ Final structure:

- Several separate citizen committees
- Single topic for each
- 6-month timeline
- Reports issued to City Council



The tasks at hand...

- Four areas for citizen input:

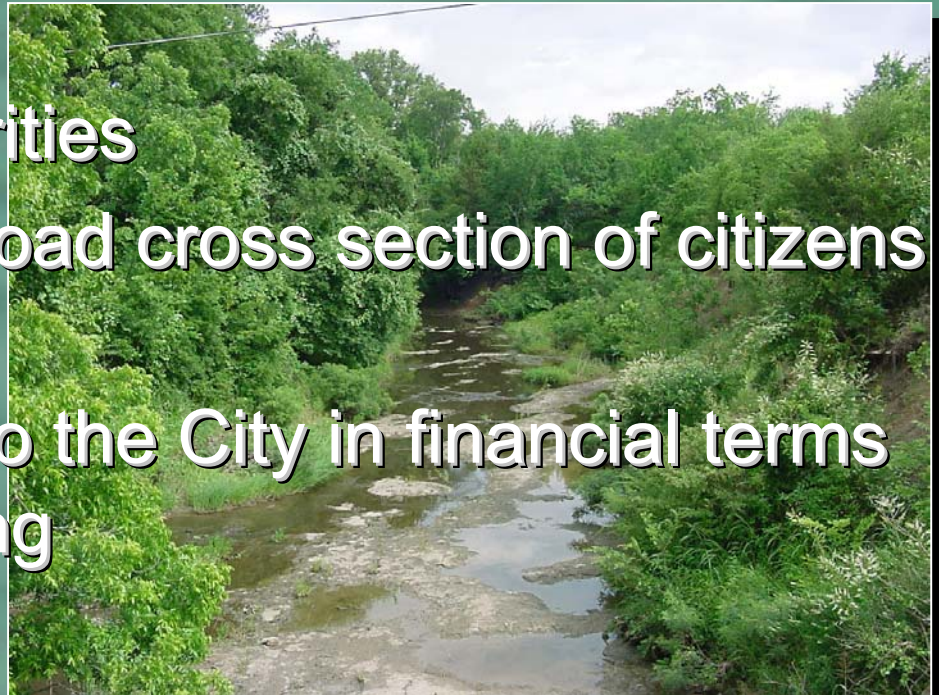
- Educational programs
- Pollution Prevention
- Stewardship
- Community Outreach

- These areas are outside the “norm” for City staff activity and function well in the domain of community involvement



Issues of stewardship

- What these tasks have in common:
 - Long-term management of natural resources
 - Identification of community's priorities
 - Involvement of broad cross section of citizens and age groups
 - Tangible benefit to the City in financial terms and citizen backing



Sand Creek

Resources for community programs

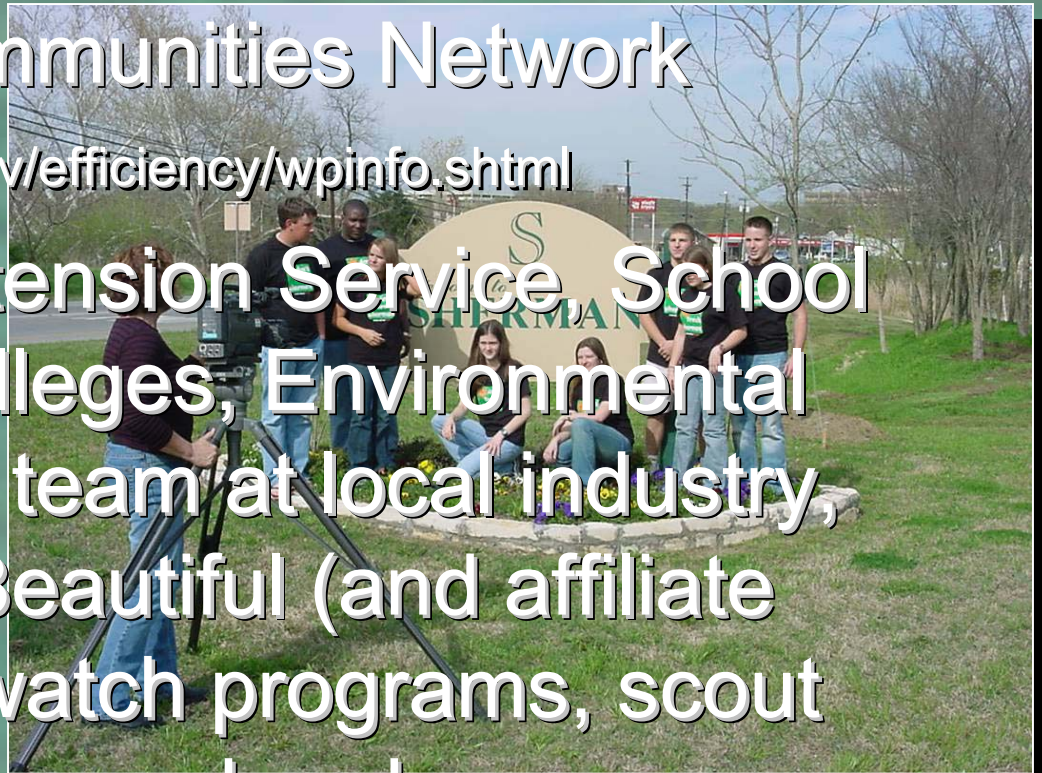
- EPA Green Communities Program

www.epa.gov/greenkit/

- DOE Smart Communities Network

www.sustainable.doe.gov/efficiency/wpinfo.shtml

- Cooperative Extension Service, School District, local colleges, Environmental Health & Safety team at local industry, Keep America Beautiful (and affiliate groups), water watch programs, scout troops, civic groups, churches



Sherman High School students